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AMERICAN EMIGRATION.

A

DISCOURSE

IN BEHALF OF THE

AMERICAN

HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

PREACHED IN THE CITIES OF NEW YORK AND  
BROOKLYN, MAY, 1857.

BY

REV. J. M. STURTEVANT, D. D.,  
PRESIDENT OF ILLINOIS COLLEGE.

NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY,  
BIBLE HOUSE, ASTOR PLACE.

1857.

JOHN A. GRAY, PRINTER,

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## DISCOURSE.

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Matt. 10 : 5, 6. "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying : Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not : but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

IF I mistake not, the superficial reader of the Bible often greatly misapprehends these words ; perhaps some have even felt themselves shocked at the sentiment supposed to be expressed in them. If we will not have the candor or take the trouble, to infer their true spirit from the general tenor of our Lord's life and teachings, and especially from the relations of his then present labors to the establishing of the kingdom of heaven among men, these words will seem to have been uttered in that spirit of Jewish exclusiveness, which would forever confine the knowledge and the blessings of the true religion to the Jewish people, and deprive all the rest of the world of any participation in them. Nothing, however, could be farther from the true spirit of the text.

Many persons seem to consider the Jewish dispensation as a perfect failure. Their conception of the subject is, that God raised up the Jewish nation to be his peculiar people, disciplined it by a series of miraculous interpositions through a period of fifteen hundred years, and then broke it in pieces and cast it off, because nothing could be done with it ; that it did indeed receive in trust those lively oracles of God, the Old Testament

Scriptures, and hand them over to the Christian Church, and that a Jewish mother did indeed give birth to the Messiah; but that from this point the influence and usefulness of the Jewish dispensation ceased.

This is certainly a very shallow and inadequate view of the subject. It was the object of that ancient economy to raise up and qualify one people to receive the promised Messiah, to appreciate that fullness of divine revelation which he should make, and to become his missionaries to publish his glad tidings to the nations, and found the Christian Church in many lands.

And with this design of the Jewish Church the result corresponded. True, the Jewish state rejected the Son of God, and instigated his crucifixion, and thus doomed itself to speedy and terrible destruction. But there were thousands of humble and devout persons among the Jews, who were prepared to receive the promised Saviour, and to appreciate his spiritual doctrines and his divine mission; while the most refined philosophy of Greece mocked and said, What will this babbler say? Jewish men did first receive the Gospel; Jewish men became its first preachers and missionaries; Jerusalem became the very centre and citadel of the christian mission; and from Jerusalem Jewish men carried the Gospel to the Euphrates and to the Pillars of Hercules, to the banks of the Nile, and the Rhine, and the Danube. Jewish men did, in a single generation, fill the vast Roman Empire with christian teaching and christian churches.

Hence, in establishing his kingdom on earth, our Lord's first work was with the Jewish mind. The ripe harvest of fifteen hundred years was to be gathered in. The men who, as the product of the long history of God's chosen people, were trained for the solemn crisis, now at hand, were to be, by the voice of the Master and

his chosen band, called out from among the Jewish people, and prepared to go abroad on their mission to mankind. The chosen people of God were to be summoned to come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. The Pentecost was to be ushered in; the church of Jerusalem was to be founded, from which the beams of salvation would shine on the remotest nations of the known world, before the men then living were in their graves. And time pressed—the hour of destiny was near. In a few months the great expiatory sacrifice would have been offered, the veil of the temple have been rent, and the time for proclaiming the kingdom of heaven to all nations have come. To the Jews then—to the Jew, was the first message. Well might the Lord say, “Go not into the way of the Gentiles;” they are not prepared for this crisis of the ages; “into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not,” their time is not yet. “Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” and summon them to their glorious national destiny, as the missionaries of these glad tidings to every people, and kindred, and nation. This is, I am persuaded, the true spirit of our text. There is no national narrowness, no Jewish exclusiveness here.

There are several analogies between the age in which the Christian religion was first propagated in the world and that in which we live, which are full of interest both to the philosopher and the Christian, and which must be regarded as invested with very great practical significancy. In that age a general expectation had been awakened by the prophecies of the Old Testament, that the Messiah was about to appear, and establish the kingdom of God among men. The meaning of the prophecies foretelling those great events, was then but ill understood; but we know that they implied that the blessings of the revealed religion were to overleap those

national boundaries, which had hitherto confined them, and to be freely imparted to the Gentile world. In our age, the prophecies of that same ancient Book of God have awakened a like expectation, that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is to overleap the boundaries which have long confined it, and to be given to all nations. In that age, there was a providential preparation for the planting and wide dissemination of the Gospel in the world, such as had never existed before, and did not exist again for more than fifteen hundred years. In our age, there is an equally providential preparation, the work of many ages, for the fulfillment of the prophecies which point to our time; the giving of this same Gospel of salvation to every nation under heaven. In that age, there was one people, a rebellious and stiff-necked people indeed, and yet trained by ages of providential discipline to be the messengers of Christ to the millions of the Roman Empire, and that people placed by their wide dispersion, —which had already been going on for ages,—in such relations to the mighty mass, as to give them peculiar and unrivaled facilities for accomplishing the work assigned them. The converts on the day of Pentecost were devout Jews, from every nation under heaven, assembled at Jerusalem to worship. In that assembly, was the nucleus of a christian church in almost every city of the Roman Empire. Wherever the Apostles went, they found Jews and a Jewish synagogue, and in that synagogue they preached their first sermon, and made their first converts. Dispersed Jews formed the line of electric conduction, along which the Gospel flashed from Jerusalem to the extremities of the empire. This is Providence—this is God's work.

But in this particular, our analogy does not fail us. In our age, there is a people no less distinctly marked than the Jew in the age of Augustus—prepared by a

providential training no less peculiar, for achieving this work of Christian propagation, now indicated alike by the index finger of prophecy and Providence. As Abraham was called by the voice of God, to go out from his kindred and country to seek an unknown land for the inheritance of his posterity, so was that modern people, to which I refer, driven out by the fierce persecutions of the seventeenth century from kindred and country, to seek for themselves and their children a home across an almost unknown ocean, and in the great and terrible American wilderness—a home where they might worship God according to the dictates of their conscience, and construct the Church and the State after the model which had already been shown them. It is due to the simple historic truth, to recognize the fact, that all which is most characteristic and most valuable in American history and American society, is due to the influence of that portion of our original population, which was brought to our shores by the pressure of such circumstances, and the influence of such motives. This is all which is intended by the statement just made. And I give no other preëminence to New England, than results from the undeniable fact that its settlement was almost wholly the result of the causes alluded to. It is enough for my purpose that it be borne in mind, that God did separate from all the elements of the old world, a very peculiar people; that he let loose the fires of persecution to drive them from their homes, and led them by his providence, to this good land of ours, to lay the foundations of a free religious republic, which, though it had no model in the past, was to be the hope of the future.

The proposition which I assert, and which I wish to confirm and apply is, that *as God in the apostolic age,*

*committed the work of propagation to Jewish hands, so, in this age of universal Christian propagandism, he hath preëminently committed it to this people, which he thus providentially planted in the American wilderness; and that, consequently, this American people should enlist the prayerful solicitude of all who in our day labor for the conversion of the world to Christ—just as the Jewish people were regarded with most peculiar interest by Christ and his Apostles.*

It will at once be apparent to every thoughtful hearer, that the subject thus indicated is of vast extent, and that in order to have any hope of handling it successfully in a single discourse, I must pass by a very large portion of the material of instructive thought which it suggests, and present it only in a single aspect. And there is a single view of the subject which is peculiarly appropriate to this occasion. *What is the function of the American Home Missionary Society, in whose behalf we are met this evening? It is, to follow the American emigrant, in all his migrations, and to plant the permanent institutions of the Christian faith wherever he builds his cabin.* That religious stock from which, as I have said, all the best peculiarities of American society originated, have ever regarded it as a cardinal article of their creed, that religious instruction must keep pace with the migrations of the emigrant, and that ample provisions for religious culture must be made coëxtensive with the tillage of the soil. The American Home Missionary Society has been, now for these many years, the principal agency by which this article of their religious faith has been carried into practice. With American emigration, then, has this noble Society to do.

I risk nothing in the assertion, that it is through this same emigration that the American people is to

exert, beyond comparison, its most powerful influence upon the religious destinies of the world. It is this very emigration which, more than any other peculiarity of our history, constitutes us the missionary people of the nineteenth century.

Let us, then, for a few moments contemplate this phenomenon of *American emigration*, and try, if possible, to grasp its import and its relations to the future religious condition of mankind, and endeavor to derive from thence those motives to greater efficiency in the cause of Home Missions, which a true view of this subject will certainly furnish. The Jew converted the Roman Empire to Christianity, by the occasion of his forced dispersions. The American people shall yet convert the world to Christ, by their voluntary and spontaneous migrations.

Since the introduction of Christianity into the world, perhaps the most striking feature in history is the steady and irresistible progress of population from the East towards the West. It is as steady as the flow of our own Mississippi towards the Gulf, and almost equally dates from immemorial antiquity. What is modern Europe but one of the products of this migration, which overhung in dense and threatening clouds of barbarism the frontiers of Greece and Rome in the palmyest days of their power, which trampled them in the dust, in the days of their decrepitude, and overspread all Europe. And when Europe was full, and these barbarous hordes had been for ages subjected to civilizing influences, borne over that deluge of barbarism in the ark which God had provided—the Christian Church—then America was discovered, and laid open by an improved art of navigation to the colonial enterprises of Europe. The ocean was bridged, and the mighty human stream



rolled on towards the West without obstruction. An unpeopled continent opened its bosom to the coming emigrant. It is now more than three hundred years since emigrants from all the principal nations of Europe have been taking possession of this new home of the human race in the West. Nearly all the principal nations of Christendom have participated, in greater or less degree, in the movement; and the Atlantic Ocean, before unvisited by the most adventurous mariner—except along its eastern shores—has become the great highway of the world.

In the early part of the seventeenth century, the eastern shores of the United States began to receive an European population, mostly from England, and from these beginnings originated a series of providential developments unprecedented in the history of the world. The emigrants were largely the descendants of those same Saxons, who, more than a thousand years ago, invaded England as a band of barbarian pirates. But when they reach our shores they are barbarians and pirates no longer. They bring to the inhospitable wilderness, the highest culture of the age and the purest religious faith on earth. Here they form a community in the wilderness. Soon, the wilderness disappears before them. The Atlantic slope of the continent is a garden, the Alleghanies are crossed, and a multitudinous emigration from the older settlements spreads itself over the magnificent central valley of North America. Here the most adventurous emigrant imagined that the ultimate destination of this wondrous human flood was reached, that to fill all this great valley with a civilized and almost numberless population, was all that remained to be done. But how great the mistake! The very men, who began the settlement of the Mississippi, lived to see the barriers of the

Rocky Mountains crossed, and the same human deluge, spreading itself along the shores of the Pacific; and American emigration can now as easily fill our whole national domain, from ocean to ocean, as, in their season, it could people Vermont or Western New York. The Anglo American emigrant holds North America in his grasp. And is this the end? Have we at last reached the final results of European, and especially of English and American emigration? If with a population of twenty three millions we seize with such vigor on the unpeopled lands of the earth, what should we not achieve with a population of two hundred millions, extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific? Are we not dealing, then, with a world phenomenon rather than with one which belongs alone to North America?

In order to do any justice to this theme, I must be indulged in a few numerical calculations. It is with unfeigned sorrow, that I perceive that I can not, in accordance with truth, found these calculations on the actual population of our whole country. But I am compelled to acknowledge, that there could be no appropriateness to my subject in any estimates founded on such a basis. I can not shut my eyes to the fact that the cruel and unchristian system of oppression, which has gained possession of fifteen States of our beloved confederation, has, to a great extent, disqualified them to take their part in this missionary work, which the Lord hath allotted to the American people. Instead of aiding in planting Christian churches in regions beyond, they have need, even now, of an expensive system of missionary effort, to rebuild those which this abomination hath made desolate in generations past, and is making desolate in the present. Their migrations are, to a wonderful extent, not the migrations of intelligence, but of ignorance; the wilderness is seldom made glad by their

coming; the institutions of free instruction and free worship spring up but very sparsely along their pathway. With few and rare, though noble exceptions—with some of whom it has been my own privilege to coöperate—they do not carry abroad either religion or freedom. The greatest danger of our country is, that vast regions of our virgin soil, now enjoying Nature's freedom, will be overrun by that dark system of slavery, which this portion of our country nurtures at home, and disseminates abroad. I say not these things because I love to say them, but because truthfulness to my subject requires it; and this I will not violate in a vain attempt to conceal that shame of my own dear country, which has already fixed the gaze of an astonished world. If these States of our Union ever bear their part in fulfilling our great religious destiny, it will be after that system of oppression, so fatally in conflict with our origin, our history, and our religion, shall have been completely swept away. Such a day, I trust, is coming. The Lord hasten it in his time!

We must, therefore, confine our view to the sixteen non-slaveholding States. For obvious reasons, unnecessary to be particularized, we shall also leave out of our estimate the colored population of the Free States. It is, in them all, too small to be a very influential element, and in many of them, is rather diminishing than increasing.

The free white population of the Free States was by the census of 1850, in round numbers, 13,000,000. The population of the same States in 1790 was, 1,900,000. One may easily satisfy himself from these data, that the rate of increase for this period of sixty years was more than 38 per cent, for each ten years. It is also worthy of remark, that from 1830 to 1840, the ratio was above 39 per cent; and from 1840 to 1850, almost 40 per

cent; showing, thus, an increasing rather than a diminishing rate of progress. There is no reason to doubt, that nearly the same ratio of increase extends far back into the colonial period—probably to the very founding of the colonies; but there are no data for ascertaining this point with accuracy.

From the date of the last census to the year two thousand, is a period of one hundred and fifty years. Let us, therefore, assume as a basis of calculation 13,000,000, as the free white population of the Free States, in 1850. Let us take as the ratio of increase, not 38 per cent, which is the actual ratio of the last sixty years, but 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  per cent, which is less than the ratio of increase of our whole population, certainly since the Revolution, and probably from the very founding of the Colonies. With these data, let us carry our estimate forward for a period of one hundred and fifty years, or till A.D. 2,000. The time is short. There may be those sitting on these seats to-night who will behold the faces of some who will witness its completion; and yet the result is overwhelming. We are almost afraid to announce it. It is very little short of *one thousand millions*—equal to the present estimated population of the whole earth. This is not given as a prophecy of the future, or even as a proximate prophecy. But it is given as showing the magnitude of that force with which we are dealing, in our Home Missionary enterprise. I wish also to show, that in our ordinary conceptions of this subject we set much too narrow limits for the probable future expansion of this amazing force.

The supposed counteracting causes which would, on a superficial view of this subject, lead us to set aside the astounding result just given, as of no practical value, are three, and only three—want of room, failure of

foreign immigration, and a gradual deterioration of the average character of our people.

As to the *first* of these causes of limitation, it is to be remembered that our question is not how far the American Union will extend, or how great a nation the United States will become. That is a question which no human sagacity can decide; and with which our present subject and this occasion have nothing at all to do. In regard to this matter, we are engaged in a political experiment which has no precedent in the past; and the world, philosophers and all, will be obliged patiently to wait for the issue. But our inquiry relates to the extension of a population having certain religious and social characteristics, and bearing the moral lineage of the Pilgrims of the Mayflower.

It is also to be remembered, that our question is to be judged of, not in view of the tardy movements of by-gone ages, but in view of the quickened and constantly quickening movement of the nineteenth century. Our instruments of locomotion and communication are commensurate with the resources of our planet. While I am speaking, preparations are in progress for uniting Europe and America in marriage, by the telegraph wire. The iron track of the steam chariot will soon be continuous, from the Hudson to the Columbia, and from the English Channel to the Yellow Sea. With the control of such instruments of locomotion, it is in the power of a people such as now inhabits these States, to expand itself upon any unoccupied lands on the face of the whole earth. Our question then is not what unoccupied room there is in our country, or in North America, or even in all America, but on the globe! How little danger there is, then, that any people having the will and the power to expand itself over an unpeopled world, will be restrained by want of room. What un-

told millions may yet find room in our own national domain. The wildest enthusiast who has spoken on this subject after his first tour in the West, has never half reached the truth. One will be much more likely, indeed, to appear as an enthusiast, after a sober residence of a quarter of a century in the great valley, than after a single autumnal tour. Of the capabilities of our great central valley for affording the materials of human subsistence and wealth, the half has never yet been told, and never will be, till we are all in our graves. And what of all our Pacific slope? And what of all the rest of North America, so far as now unoccupied—or held by peoples utterly incapable of retaining it for a moment, against the competition of an energetic, free, and highly civilized people? And what of all South America, either in the wildness of nature, or held by peoples who have not the energy, the civilization, or the arts, to subdue and use it, in five centuries? There is no occupancy of South America, which can present any obstacles to an energetic and free people, invading it, not by the barbarous battalions of the filibuster, but by the arts of peaceful industry. Let us take, as an illustration, the empire of Brazil. Considered in respect to its territory, its climate, and its soil, it is perhaps the most magnificent national domain on earth. Its territory exceeds in extent the whole present territory of the United States, by 37,000 square miles. Its settlement dates nearly one hundred years prior to the settlement of the United States. And yet, its present population is only about six millions. And of these six millions, three millions are Negro slaves; two millions more are of the various cross races, of the Portuguese, the Negro, and the Indian; and only one million are of full European blood. The increase of its population is scarcely greater than that of the overgrown and decaying monarchies of Europe.

What is the probability that such a nation can hold that vast territory against the peaceful spread, and healthful, natural growth of a free and enlightened people, armed with all the appliances of art, industry, and instruction, and taking possession of the earth, not in the name of any earthly majesty, but in the name of freedom, of religion, and of God? And yet, this is but a specimen of every inch of American soil, not already occupied by men who speak the English tongue, and love English-born freedom, and the faith of English Protestantism.

America, then, from the Arctic seas to Cape Horn, is open to the growth of a free religious people, such as our fathers planted on these Atlantic shores. I deem it no exaggeration to say, that if we are looking for room into which to expand our growth, for a hundred and fifty years to come, America alone, will afford accommodations, and a magnificent home, for more than one thousand millions—the result of our numerical calculation. And what of all the thousand islands of the Pacific, whose native population, in the loveliest climate of the earth, is slowly melting away, before the vices of barbarism, and leaving them almost vacant to the hand of the civilized and christian emigrant? And what of the almost continental group, which divides the Pacific from the Indian Ocean, with all their vast resources of agricultural and mineral wealth? And what of all Africa, just beginning to be opened to the geographer, still almost a wilderness? And what of vast regions of Asia herself, once swarming with uncounted millions, now almost as desolate as the American wilds?

I know, much of this unoccupied land is desert—much of it unfit for the home of a civilized and enterprising people, on account of a malarious atmosphere. But when you have made all these allowances, and

every other which the case requires, it seems to me, that the limit which will check the increase of a people, full of the vital energy of freedom and pure religion, is too remote to create much present apprehension, or much to modify our estimates of the future, for a period not longer than one hundred and fifty years.

The truth on this subject is not to be seen in the experience of the past, but in the clear prophecy of the future. In the past, man has never been able to people the earth. The causes which have prevented, though full of interest, would open too vast a field for this occasion. The fact is obvious. Here and there have been found spots of limited extent, enjoying what is called civilization, and with a dense population; while nine tenths of the whole world has been, in all past time, peopled by a few scattered barbarians, or lying in desolation, untrodden by human feet. This will not last forever. God will yet raise up a generation strong enough to grasp and use this earth, which he hath given to man. We are not without our hopes that he has already done so. If so, we need have no fear that there is not ample room for its expansion.

But perhaps it will seem to some, that though there is ample room in the unpeopled earth for all these millions, yet the phenomenon of Anglo American increase and *expansion is necessarily temporary* and transient, because due to causes which must soon cease to act, and that the progress of our population will then only be such as has been exhibited by other lands, and in other times. Let us then inquire :

What are the *causes* of this wonderful growth?

It is obvious, in the first place, that it is not caused solely by the mere abundance of cheap and fertile land. Thomas Carlyle is reported to have said, in conversa-



tion with an American : "The secret of your prosperity is plenty of cheap and fertile land." The remark may be worthy of the transcendental mystic, but certainly is not worthy of the sound practical philosopher. Many other modern nations have been, or are now in circumstances as favorable in this respect as ourselves, and yet in our case only has this result followed.

Of the maritime powers of Europe, England was almost the last in the race of discovery, and that in an age when discovery gave little to the lands discovered ; yet England alone has succeeded in transplanting civilization into the wilderness. One hundred years ago, France had a far better prospect of planting a mighty empire in America than England. From the mouth of the St. Lawrence to the mouth of the Mississippi, all was hers. The French mind was full of the conception of a vast Gallic empire in America, and was exerting its best energies for its realization. But where is the French empire in America now ? How few the foot-prints of the French colonist ! The very language of France, with all its power to fascinate, is perishing from the Continent. It furnished, indeed, a considerable portion of our geographical nomenclature ; but the names derived from that source are now so Anglicized, both in form and sound, that a Frenchman would seldom recognize them.

And the failure of French colonization in America is not the mere fortune of war. Notwithstanding the transfer of Canada to the British crown, the large French population of that colony have had unlimited freedom of growth and expansion. But where are their colonies ? The French philosopher, De Tocqueville, says of them : " Wherever the French settlers were numerically weak and partially established, they have disappeared. Those who remain are collected on a

small extent of country, and are now subject to other laws. The 400,000 French of Lower Canada constitute at the present time, the remnant of an old nation, lost in the midst of a new people. A foreign population is increasing around them unceasingly on all sides, and already penetrates among the ancient masters of the country, predominates in their cities, and corrupts their language." He elsewhere states that this remnant of the old French colony is already experiencing the evils of an overgrown population, almost as much as the old nations of Europe; yet nothing can quicken their enterprise to spread themselves abroad over an open continent, after the manner of their English and American neighbors.

Russia has no lack of cheap and fertile land; but the increase of her population, except by annexation, is scarcely, if at all, more rapid than that of England herself. Spain had possession of Mexico a century, and of Peru three quarters of a century, before the Pilgrims set their feet on Plymouth Rock; yet the Mexico of the year 1850 is not more civilized, and scarcely more populous, than the Mexico of Montezuma; and the Peru of our day has no reason to exult in a comparison with the Peru of the Incas. Brazil has been longer under the hand of the European colonist than the United States. Yet, with a territory larger and more magnificent in its natural features than ours, it has only one million of European inhabitants.

There is, then, something here besides "plenty of fertile and cheap land." What is it that has given to the English settlements everywhere, and to the United States in particular, this amazing preponderance over all the other colonial enterprises of modern times, I may say with equal truth, of all times. For the phenomena of American emigration are entirely unprecedented in the history of the world, ancient or modern. What

then are its causes? Are they permanent or transient? If they are transient, the results would be of great interest. But if they are permanent, the destiny of an unpeopled world is in them. I claim that they are, or, by the blessing of God on our endeavors, may be, as permanent as our mountains and our rivers. What, then, are they?

Though to a superficial view the causes appear to be various, yet when traced back by a careful analysis to their source, they are all found to be emanations from one single moral force—the *characteristic religious system of the English dissenters of the seventeenth century*. Despotism could not endure these principles, and drove them out with fire and faggot from the Old World, and in so doing, planted the seeds of a world-wide freedom in the New. The Church of God could not be planted in Egypt; and therefore God suffered Pharaoh to drive out Israel by intolerable oppression, that he might plant it in the promised land.

The causes of American growth which strike the eye are chiefly three.

1. The moral dignity and purity of the christian family. It is the complaint of the philosophic and candid De Tocqueville, that wherever Frenchmen have formed settlements in the neighborhood of barbarous native tribes, they have uniformly intermarried with them, and instead of making Frenchmen of these natives, they have themselves become savages. The same language may be applied, with equal force and justice, to the colonial settlements which have emanated from all Catholic Europe. De Tocqueville could discern this fact and its sorrowful consequences; but he does not appear to discern its cause. That cause is found in the Roman Catholic doctrine of the superior sanctity of a state of celibacy. According to that doctrine, the family

is not indeed exactly a state of sin ; but it is a degradation. No father, no mother can compare in dignity with the unmarried priest and nun. There can be no holiness in the family altar. If one wishes to worship at a holy altar, he must go where unmarried priests officiate in robes canonical. Who does not see that such a religion degrades the family ?—places it on the very borders of a vicious life, shorn of all its moral dignity and glory ? No wonder, that one whose views of domestic life are thus vitiated and degraded should choose for a wife a heathen or a savage. And accordingly, wherever men of this faith have formed colonies in the wilderness, this result has followed ; and it will follow in the future. Society is thus rotten at its heart, and what can it do but languish and die, as it does in all the colonial settlements of Catholic Europe ? This is the sickness of which it languishes.

How different the influence of our fathers' faith ! With them the family is the holiest thing on earth. They knew nothing of an altar holier than the family altar. They knew no priest of greater sanctity than the father, priest of his own house. Oh ! how improbable that a man of such a faith would choose, to preside around his fire-side, a heathen and a savage ! No ! he will choose a cultivated being, a Christ-like spirit, a blessed heir of heaven. Ah ! thanks to God, the family constituted according to that faith, is a germ of christian civilization, which never can die. Place such a family in any remote wild of the earth, and it has life in itself ; it will send out the roots, and the branches, and the seeds of a christian civilization, which will cover the hills, and make glad the valleys all around it. And here is found one of the principal sources of the vital power of the Anglo American emigrant. Wherever such a family is planted in the American wilderness,

there is the Church of Christ, there is freedom, there is christian civilization.

And God be forever praised for the *American Home Missionary Society*. Its function is to follow such families to the heart of the Western wilderness, to the banks of the Columbia, and the gold fields of California, and cheer, and encourage, and help them to plant the Church of Christ in those primeval solitudes.

2. Another and most potent cause of the wonderful characteristics of American emigration, is the fact that with us the laborer is an educated, civilized man. It is with us almost alone, that the thinking, independent, self-poised, and self-responsible mind, is united in the same person with the brawny arm and hard hand of the laborer. Yet this is a condition without the fulfillment of which the phenomena of our emigration are quite impossible. The wealthy, the high-born, the ruling classes will not emigrate to the wilderness. They enjoy far greater advantages at home, than the wilderness, however fertile in resources, can afford them. If the unpeopled waste is to be reclaimed and made the home of man, it must be by those, whose lot is comparatively a hard one, by the laboring classes. But if the laboring classes are uneducated barbarians, as has been the fact in most other countries, they will be destitute of that skill, that knowledge, that self-reliance, without which men will seldom undertake the task of seeking a new home in the wilds. The very conception of a migration to Kansas, or Minnesota, or Oregon implies knowledge, resources, self-reliance in a very high degree. And then, again, if an uncultivated, uneducated, laboring population does emigrate, it will not carry civilization with it. It has it not to carry. Its colonies will languish for ages in ignorance and barbarism.

It is precisely for this reason, that the civilization of

Greece and Rome did not cover Europe and Asia, and fill them with light, and leave no barbarians to destroy them, and thus render the dark ages impossible. The laborer, the only man who would emigrate to the wilderness, was too ignorant to know that there was any wilderness, and too barbarous to transplant civilization. This is the only reason why Egypt did not explore and subdue the banks of the Nile, as rapidly as we do those of the Mississippi and its branches. Talk not of malaria—there is malaria enough in the dark, damp, primeval forests that overhang the Mississippi, the Missouri, and the Illinois; but it is no barrier to the progress of the civilized laborer, seeking a magnificent home for himself and his posterity.

The same consideration furnishes the only explanation of the fact that, though Europe is at this day swarming with emigrants from almost every nation, none of those nationalities, except the English, are at all reproducing themselves by their colonies. Their emigrants are all mingled, absorbed, and lost in the English speaking deluge, which is encircling the globe. The reason is, that, for the most part, their laborers are uncultivated men, quite incapable of carrying civilization and freedom into the wilderness. They are therefore glad to avail themselves of those foundations, which our emigrants lay. They are absorbed into our new settlements, and rapidly lose their language and nationality.

It is then perfectly obvious, that we owe our power of multiplying civilized communities in every unpeopled spot to the fact, that our laboring classes are educated, thinking, self-reliant men—as De Tocqueville says of them: “the product of eighteen centuries.” Whence, then, this characteristic of our people? Clearly, from the religion of our fathers. That religion is the only moral force, which ever has educated men in masses as

men, individually responsible to God, and having individual, inalienable rights. Take your stand in that religious faith, and knowledge—knowledge of God through his word and his works, knowledge of rights, and knowledge of duties to God and man—becomes the first want of every human soul. No child will grow up in ignorance in any family which heartily adopts that faith. A community which is pervaded by it, will effectively provide for the education of every child within its limits. Education, culture, become as necessary and as universal, as air, water, or sunlight. This faith it is, which has educated the American laborer, and given him his power to make the wilderness to rejoice and blossom as the rose. And he will never lose this power, till he loses his religion, and, therefore, the educating force which it exerts.

3. The only remaining cause which I shall mention of the characteristic results of American emigration is, the peculiar public spirit, or, if I may so call it, the social constructiveness, which characterizes the American emigrant. This results directly from what has been said, and therefore need not detain us long. It would be difficult, adequately to describe the rude and unsightly figure, often presented by a company of American emigrants on their way to their new home in the wilds. It has often excited the derision of the gay, the pleasure-loving, and the proud. But any one who well knows that group, and has a heart to appreciate it, will look on with veneration. Æneas is said to have carried the Trojan household gods to Italy. Those unsightly wagons are bearing a nobler and more enduring treasure, more worthy to be celebrated in the immortal epic, than the Trojan Penates. They carry no material image, no external emblem, but in their very minds and hearts they bear along, through forest and prairie, all the in-

stitutions of a ripe christian civilization. The school-house, the college, the church, the teaching ministry, are all traveling in those rude wagons to their new home in the wilderness. At Harvard and Yale, college halls stood beneath the shade of the primeval forest; and to this day it is the peculiarity of the American emigrant, that he mingles in one concert, the tolling of the college bell, the howling of the wolf, and the crack of the huntsman's rifle.

Nor is it needful to spend time to prove, that this peculiarity is the result of the same religious system, or that all other colonizations in the New World have utterly failed, for the want of this very social constructiveness. Among the colonies of France, of Spain, of Portugal, you look for it in vain; and for the want of it, weakness and premature old age and decay, mark all their settlements.

I think now, that any candid man will admit, that the peculiar and wonderful success of American colonization, is to be ascribed, almost wholly, to these three causes—the purity and moral dignity of the family, the education and culture of the great mass of our industrious population, and the public spirit, the social constructiveness, which distinguishes us from all other peoples; and that these three causes run up into one—the religious system of our Puritan fathers. Then must such a man grant all which I claim, on this occasion, that, *so far as that religious system prevails, so far will this American people retain their power of expanding themselves over the earth.* So far as this system prevails, it will cause that “every one that is feeble among the people shall be as David, and the house of David as God, as the angel of the Lord before them.”

Let us suppose that the whole present territory of the United States were filled with such a people, num-



bering, as it inevitably must, not less than three hundred millions—every family a fortress of social strength, every laborer an educated, civilized, self-reliant man, conscious of his duties and his rights, every community rejoicing in those institutions, which provide for universal culture—with what power would such a people extend its arms to the North and the South, to the East and the West, to take hold of and subdue an unpeopled world. Its colonial settlements would be found on every unoccupied spot, where a furrow could be turned on a tillable soil, wherever there was a water-fall to turn machinery. Every wilderness and solitary place would be glad for them, every desert would bud and blossom as the rose.

And why should we despair, that this grand conception may be, in some good degree, realized? To a result so sublime, the settlement of our religious fathers on these shores evidently looked. If I may so speak, it seems evidently to have been God's plan. And shall we be like the faithless one of old, who said, if there were windows in heaven, then might this thing be? Shall we not rather believe that God can and will accomplish what he has undertaken? True, *slavery* now holds half our States in bondage. But may we not believe that this giant iniquity will be swept away, before this inevitable current of Christian freedom? The time is near—it will perhaps be in the days of some child in this house—when every foot of our national domain will be wanted for the free laborer; and slave labor can not long hold it against such a competition. Already, are there unmistakable signs, that freedom is dawning upon the fertile plains and iron hills of Missouri. It is not alone to recent political events that I allude; though these are of a character to enlist the sympathies of the patriot, and the prayers of

the Christian ; but I refer still more especially to the amazing relative increase of her free population, resulting from causes so deep and permanent, so entirely providential, that her politicians have little power, either to accelerate or retard it.

Nor can slavery long protect itself from destruction, by the same cause—the inevitable inroads of free labor, all along its northern border. Virginia—glorious old Virginia, amid whose sunny hill-sides holy Mount Vernon nestles, must yet again be free, and extend, as of old, the unshackled hand to her brothers of the North, in carrying religion and freedom over the continent. Time would fail me, to discuss this subject. Let us trust in God and take courage. I can not believe, that God has doomed one half the soil of this home of the free to perpetual slavery. There is ground for hope—the time of deliverance may be near. Room for expansion is as much a necessity of our free laboring population, as air or sunlight. The days of plenty of cheap fertile land, easily accessible and protected from the curse of slavery by national *faith* and national law, are drawing to an end. Nothing will then remain, but the living stream which for half a century, has been rolling on towards the North West must flow down upon the border Slave States, and spread itself over lands which slavery can never cultivate. The free laborers will not leave three fourths of the lands of the adjacent slaveholding States to lie forever uncultivated. Freedom will want those lands ; and it will have them : for in this country, no law can hinder, that the owner of unoccupied land should enrich himself by its sale. Whenever, therefore, the free laborer wants those lands, he can have them. This seems to me a providential cause which dooms slavery.

It may, however, be thought by some, that the rapidity of our growth and expansion must soon be greatly diminished by the *failure of foreign immigration*. I shall not devote much time to this part of the subject, but only make two or three brief suggestions.

It may seem to some, that the sooner it fails, the better for our hopes. But I think we may safely leave this point in the hands of the Divine Architect of our national destiny. He has, evidently, designs much more comprehensive, than merely to build up a great free religious nation out of the direct descendants of our pious ancestry. The leaven of their principles is about being mingled with a mass almost as mighty and heterogeneous as that through which Christianity was diffused, in the ages that succeeded that of the Apostles. And God knows best, with how much meal it is safe to mingle it. The leaven shall not be lost; it shall not lose its power; the whole shall be leavened. Nor can I see anywhere the indication, that the religious character of the American people, is to be materially modified by the accession of these foreign elements. There is evidence, on the other hand, that they are themselves undergoing a process of assimilation, unequalled in all the past. Scarcely any portion of the social structure, is so sensitive to foreign influence, as its language. Where, then, is the evidence that the English language is to be either supplanted among us by foreign influence, or permanently corrupted? Assimilation in language, is a type, and only a type, of the universal assimilation that is going on. Nor can I forbear remarking, that the influence of foreign immigration in increasing the rapidity of our growth, is, in my opinion, greatly overrated. The ratio of our increase has, as a matter of fact, been but little greater, when foreign immigration was greatest, than when it was least. And whilst these ever-increas-

ing American communities continue, as now, to present to the needy and oppressed populations of Europe, inviting prospects of freedom, wealth, and plenty, it may be expected that foreign immigration will increase, rather than diminish. I see no reason to apprehend, either that we are to be relieved of foreign immigration, if it is an evil, or to be deprived of it, if a benefit. This topic is one of great interest and great importance, but want of time forbids my dwelling upon it now.

I do not, then, pretend to set any definite limits to the growth of our population, or to utter any definite prediction. But I do say that, on the supposition that the religious principles of our Fathers can be made to prevail coëxtensively with the migrations of our free population, I can see no cause which is likely, in any great degree, to impair the rapidity of our increase for the next one hundred and fifty years. There is no fear of want of room—an unpeopled earth affords room enough. All the causes of our unparalleled growth hitherto, originated only in the pervading influence of a pure Christianity; and provided the prevalence of these principles be made coëxtensive with our growth, may act with just as much energy upon hundreds of millions as upon a few thousands.

With these things in view, I can not help regarding this power of the American people, to extend itself over unpeopled wilds and multiply with such amazing rapidity christian communities and nations, as a cause which looks quite beyond all our vast national domain, with all the hundreds of millions it is capable of sustaining, and as promising to exert a controlling influence on the religious destinies of the globe.

The depth and solemnity of this conviction is greatly enhanced, when I take in the additional fact, that our own dear mother England, (she ought to be called the

mother of nations,) is spreading abroad her own colonial settlements, largely composed of materials kindred to our own, in almost every quarter of the globe. English and American emigration is sweeping over North America in parallel lines. If the population of British America is less than our own, it is probably increasing with no less rapidity; and evidently has open before it a most magnificent future. In the Indian Archipelago, New Zealand, and the thousand islands of the Pacific, the English human current from the west, and the American from the east, are soon to meet, and mingle their kindred waters.

It is true, then, beyond controversy or doubt, that the migrations of the English language, the spread of the old English stock, by peaceful colonization, over the unpeopled world, is the grandest phenomenon now visible on earth: it is the mightiest visible agency, which God is now employing, to change the religious and social condition of the human race, and plant the Christian religion over the world. To make England and America thoroughly Christian, is to fill the world with the knowledge of the Lord. It is to plant the Gospel of Jesus Christ in every land, before the year of our Lord, 2000.

When I have reached this stand-point, I seem almost audibly to hear the same voice, that said: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not;" and urging in our ears, go teach, *teach*, **TEACH**, the English and American emigrant. Let every emigrant's wagon that crosses the prairie, be a sanctuary of God; let the voice of christian prayer and praise ascend from the cabin of every steamer on the Western waters; let the christian minister and christian teacher accompany the woodman, the hunter, and the gold-

digger, to the wilderness; build the church and the school-house, wherever the squatter builds his cabin; and the earth shall soon be the Lord's, and the fullness thereof. Before our grandchildren go to their graves, the triumphant song shall go up: "The kingdoms of this world are become kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ."

But let us remember, that this is not the hour of triumph and victory, but of mighty, and, to human eyes, dubious conflict. There is no doctrine of manifest destiny here. The Jews had a manifest destiny; but of that destiny, as a nation, they failed. We may fail too; and if so, our failure will be the most signal in history. The passer-by will exclaim: "O Lucifer! son of the morning, how art thou fallen!" Worldliness may invade our churches, and set up the altar of Mammon, in the temple of God. Our migrations may become entirely divested of the religious element. Our emigrants may go to the wilderness only for gain, and leave their Penates behind them. Our ministers may be too fond of ease and comfort and refined literary leisure, to follow the emigrant to his wild home. The members of our churches may become too covetous and too fond of the ostentations of fashionable life, to sustain the cause of Home Missions, along our ever-receding border. Our frontier may thus be inhabited by a people knowing no God but money, and no freedom but that of licentiousness. And no man well acquainted with our recent new settlements, can help feeling a sickness of heart, at the symptoms of such moral disease seizing on these extremities of the body politic. Let us not deceive ourselves. If such a day ever comes, our glory will have departed.

We can no more subdue a continent by an emigrant population without religion, without the Church, the

school; the ministry, than Rome could hold on in her career of conquest, with the enervated legions of the latter years of the Empire. If such a day ever comes, we shall stand before the other nations of the world, despite our boasted Anglo Saxon blood, like Samson before the Philistines, when his locks were shorn.

This effort to plant the institutions of free christian society upon the borders of the ever receding wilderness demands the united and earnest coöperation of *all*, in every portion of this land, who love and cherish the faith of our fathers. It is sometimes asked, when are the churches of the old States to be relieved from these demands for aid to the new settlements? *When? Never*—till either these churches shall have utterly apostatized from Christ, or there shall be no more unpeopled wilderness on earth, to which the American emigrant can penetrate; NEVER, till this living stream shall have flowed round the earth, and planted the Church of Christ on every sunny hill-side, and in every fertile valley. The *American Home Missionary Society*, in prospect of the immediately coming future, has as truly the *world* for its field, as the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. And if any who have put their hand to the plow are disposed now to look back, they are unworthy of any part in this work. The missionaries of this Society shall yet follow the American emigrant, not only to all the fertile valleys which nestle among the snowy peaks of Oregon, and to all the gold fields of California, but to the table lands of Mexico, to the banks of the Amazon, the Orinoco, and the La Plata, and to all the thousand islands of the Pacific. This is the time for girding on the harness, not for putting it off.

And I can not forbear saying, in conclusion, that our Home Missionary enterprise ought to be a great deal

more comprehensive than it is. The work we have in hand has no particular relations to the political boundaries which separate nations. It is an effort, by means of the colonization of an English speaking people, to propagate the religious faith and the religious institutions of English Puritanism over the world. In those principles only lies the whole strength of the movement. These are the seven locks of this modern Samson. And there should be, there might be, a combined effort of all in every land, not only in these States, but in England and Scotland, in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, of all, I say, who read the English Bible, and adhere to this faith, and love these institutions, to plant them in every spot where an English speaking emigrant makes a home. Exeter Hall should annually resound with eloquent appeals in behalf of this greatest enterprise of the English race. Every church in the British Isles, which adheres to our principles and institutions, should be annually summoned to its aid; and the desire to plant the Church of Christ in the wilderness, should become the universal passion of English and American Christians; as the desire of conquest was in the Roman mind. This, and nothing short of this, would be a ruling passion corresponding with our God-appointed Mission. To this ruling passion, we must attain, or utterly fail of our manifest destiny, and hear the awful curse of the Master at last, because we "knew not the time of our visitation."

Let us never forget, that all turns on the preservation and universal diffusion of those religious principles, which have been the seeds of our national growth, thus far. It is in those principles only, that our strength lies. We have no occasion to lay any flattering unction to our hearts, because we have Abraham for our father. God is now as of old, able of these stones to raise up



children to Abraham. We do well to revere our fathers; but if we mean to finish what they began to build, and thus be truly and morally their children, we must carry their principles to the extremest limits of our national domain. We must diffuse them through all this multitudinous population, from ocean to ocean. We must represent them in institutions, as permanent as our everlasting mountains, as pure as the springs that gush out from our hills. We must never rest, till, as often as Sabbath morning returns to visit our lands, the church-going bell shall be heard on every foot of our domain, and summon every dweller on our soil to the place consecrated to spiritual worship and free christian instruction.

Then, and only then, shall our strength be irresistible. Then shall every spot which the soles of our feet tread upon, be ours. Then "shall our days be multiplied, and the days of our children, in this good land which the Lord gave unto our fathers, as the days of heaven upon earth."















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